

Message Text

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12

ACTION SNM-02

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S/NM FOR VANCE; ARA FOR DEP. ASST. SEC. LUERS; DEA FOR
ADMIN BENSINGER

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR, MX

SUBJECT: WOLFF STATEMENTS ON MEXICAN NARCOTICS PROBLEMS

REF: ALBERTI/VANCE TELECON, MARCH 16, 1976

1. SUMMARY: MARCH 16, ELCELSIOR FRONT PAGED ARMANDO VARGAS
STORY DATED IN WASHINGTON AND ENTITLED, "PROMINENT BUSINESS-
MEN IN DRUG TRAFFIC FROM MEXICO TO U.S.: LESTER WOLFF".

STORY ALLEGEDLY BASED ON PREPARED TEXT OF ADDRESS BY
WOLFF DELIVERED MARCH 15 BEFORE CENTER FOR INTERAMERICAN
RELATIONS IN NEW YORK. MEXICAN ATTORNEY GENERAL OJEDA
PAULLADA WAS PARTICULARLY DISTURBED BY (A) STATEMENTS
THAT PROMINENT MEXICAN BUSINESSMEN, POLICE OFFICIALS AND
JUDGES WERE INVOLVED IN NARCOTICS TRAFFIC; (B) ALLEGATION
THAT GOM HAD NOT COMMITTED SUFFICIENT RESOURCES
TO ANTI-NARCOTICS CAMPAIGN; AND (C) DESCRIPTION OF LACK
OF COOPERATION BETWEEN AG AND DEPT. OF DEFENSE; HE ASKED
THAT THIS ARTICLE BE CALLED TO WASHINGTON'S ATTENTION.

END SUMMARY.

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2. MAIN POINTS REPORTEDLY MADE BY WOLFF WERE AS FOLLOWS:

- A. SOME 200 PLANES CROSS THE BORDER UNOBSERVED DAILY.
- B. THE GOM HAS NOT COMMITTED SUFFICIENT RESOURCES TO THE ANTI-NARCOTICS CAMPAIGN; THERE ARE ONLY 500 FEDERAL POLICE, AND THE ARMY HAS DECREASED ITS PARTICIPATION DRASTICALLY DUE TO THE EMPLOYMENT OF HERBICIDES IN LIEU OF TROOPS IN CROP ERADICATION.
- C. THERE IS A LACK OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND POLITICAL CONTROL IN THE PRODUCING AREAS, AND THE ARMY IS AFRAID TO ENTER MANY PARTS OF THE SIERRA.
- D. THERE IS LACK OF FEDERAL CONTROL IN THE CARRYING OUT OF PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTIVES IN THE DIFFERENT STATES.
- E. CORRUPTION IS ENDEMIC IN CENTRAL AMERICA, WHERE LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS ARE POORLY PAID AND OFTEN PROVIDE PROTECTION TO NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS.
- F. SOME BUSINESSMEN IN LEGITIMATE EXPORT COMPANIES AND TRAVEL AGENCIES ARE INVOLVED IN NARCOTICS, TRAVELING ACROSS THE BORDER "AS IF THEY HAD DIPLOMATIC PASSPORTS."
- G. THERE IS NEITHER NARCOTICS INFORMATION EXCHANGE BETWEEN MEXICAN STATES NOR BETWEEN CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRIES.
- H. HIGH MEXICAN POLICE AND JUDICIAL OFFICIALS ARE INVOLVED IN PROTECTING TRAFFICKERS DESPITE PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA'S VERY SINCERE DETERMINATION TO ELIMINATE IT, THE CORRUPTION EXTENDS TO "SOME VERY HIGH PLACES IN MEXICO CITY WHERE IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO ERADICATE."
- I. THERE IS NO SUPREME INVESTIGATIVE ORGANIZATION IN MEXICO CAPABLE OF LOOKING INTO CORRUPTION, NOR IS THERE A UNIFIED COMMAND OF THE NARCOTICS CONTROL PROGRAM. THIS LATTER IS DIVIDED BETWEEN THE AG'S OFFICE AND THE ARMY, AND THERE IS LITTLE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO.
- J. THERE IS LACK OF (RADIO) COMMUNICATION BETWEEN ANTI-NARCOTICS UNITS; FURTHERMORE, TRAFFICKERS ARE OFTEN WARNED IN ADVANCE OF ERADICATION OR INTERDICTION OPERATIONS.
- K. THE MORE TOLERANT U.S. ATTITUDE TOWARD MARIJUANA WORRIES MEXICAN LEADERS GREATLY.

3. WOLFF REPORTEDLY ANNOUNCED THAT WITHIN ONE WEEK, PRESIDENT FORD WOULD RECEIVE THE REPORT OF A SPECIAL WORKING GROUP DEALING ESPECIALLY WITH ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS AND NARCOTICS CROSSING THE US/MEXICAN BORDER. HE ALSO PRAISED THE INITIAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TIVE OF PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA IN PROPOSING TWIN U.S. AND MEXICAN NARCOTICS COMMISSIONS.

4. ATTORNEY GENERAL OJEDA PAULLADA CALLED EMBASSY TO EXPRESS DEEP CONCERN OVER ABOVE REMARKS ATTRIBUTED TO CONGRESSMAN WOLFF. HE ONCE AGAIN POINTED OUT OBVIOUS CONTRAST BETWEEN U.S.G. LAUDATORY STATEMENTS CONCERNING THE MEXICAN DRUG CAMPAIGN, AND CRITICAL REMARKS EMANATING FROM OTHER

U.S. SOURCES, INCLUDING CONGRESS. AG MENTIONED HIS RECENT MEETING WITH DEA ADMINISTRATOR BENSINGER AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE CORDIAL AND COOPERATIVE RELATIONS HE ENJOYS WITH THE USG, AND EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR MR. BENSINGER'S CONSTRUCTIVE STATEMENT PRAISING THE GOM ANTI-DRUG PROGRAM ISSUED MARCH 15 IN WASHINGTON. FINALLY, AG ASKED WHAT ELSE USG MIGHT DO TO HELP PROVIDE ACCURATE AND FAVORABLE INFORMATION, PARTICULARLY IN U.S. PRESS, ON MEXICAN NARCOTICS PROGRAM.
THOMPSON

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